

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L ROME 6349

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E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, NATO
SUBJ: LONDON NATO MEETING

REF: A. STATE 086299, B. STATE 086300

1. IN ACCORDANCE INSTRUCTIONS REFTELS, EMBOFF MADE APPROACH TO MFA'S NATO OFFICE DIRECTOR (SALLEO) APRIL 18. SALLEO'S PRELIMINARY REACTIONS, WHICH SHOULD BE PROTECTED FULLY, FOLLOW.

2. SALLEO HAD JUST RECEIVED, AND READ TO EMBOFF, A REPORTING TELEGRAM FROM ITALIAN AMBASSADOR IN WASHINGTON, GAJA, COVERING THE POINTS MADE IN THE "OWEN BRIEFINGS". GAJA'S VERSION IS A FAIRLY ACCURATE RECOUNTING OF THE SPEAKING NOTES PROVIDED IN REF. B., THOUGH HIS RENDITION OF THE U.S. FEELER FOR A TRANSATLANTIC DIALOGUE WITH THE EPG SUGGESTS AT THE SAME TIME BOTH MORE VAGUENESS AND MORE PRETENTION THAN WE DERIVE FROM THE POSITION EXPRESSED IN THE SPEAKING NOTE. SALLEO IS NOW DRAFTING A REPLY TO GAJA (REPEATED TO LONDON, PARIS AND BONN), CONTAINING THE MFA'S REACTION TO THE WASHINGTON CONSULTATIONS. HE EXPECTS THERE WILL BE NO DISAGREEMENT WITHIN THE MINISTRY WITH HIS OBSERVATIONS. HIS DRAFT POSITION BEGINS, IN THE FIRST INSTANCE, WITH THE
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POINT THAT BILATERAL CONSULTATIONS OF THIS KIND ARE NOT GENERALLY A GOOD IDEA, AS THEN TEND TO WEAKEN THE PAINFULLY CONSTRUCTED BRUSSELS MULTILATERAL SYSTEM.

3. COVERING THE SPECIFIC IDEAS AS REPORTED BY AMBASSADOR GAJA, SALLEO IS MAKING THE FOLLOWING OBSERVATIONS IN HIS REPLY. (KEYED TO SECOND SET OF INDENTS REF. B.):

A. THE BOTION OF A DPC DEVELOPED LONG-TERM PROGRAM IN KEY HIGH PRIORITY AREAS IS FEASIBLE. IT WILL BE DIFFICULT HOWEVER TO LAY THE GROUNDWORK FOR AGREEMENT BEFORE THE DPC MEETING WHICH FOLLOWS PERHAPS TOO CLOSELY UPON THE LONDON MEETING.

B. AN EARLY U.S./CANADA/EPG DIALOGUE WOULD UNDOUBTEDLY BE SUPPORTED BY ITALY AND MOST OF THE OTHER EPG PARTICIPANTS. THE BLOCK WOULD LIKELY COME FROM FRANCE.

C. ITALY WOULD WELCOME THE SUGGESTION FOR AN ANALYSIS OF TREANDS IN THE USSR AND EASTERN EUROPE. HOWEVER, THE IDEA THAT SUCH AN ANALYSIS WOULD BE MADE PUBLIC (CONTAINED IN GAJA'S REPORT, NOT IN THE TEXT OF THE SPEAKING NOTES IN REF. B) WOULD BE DIFFICULT FOR THE GOI TO ACCEPT. TO BE REALLY USEFUL, SALLEI SAID, THIS ANALYSIS OUGHT TO EVOLVE INTO A SORT OF MINISTERIAL GUIDANCE ON DETENTE CRISIS MANAGEMENT, NOT A PUBLIC RELATIONS PIECE.

D. SALLEO WAS LESS THAN ENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT THE PROPOSAL FOR SETTING UP A GROUP OF RECRUITED EXPERTS TO ASSIST IN LONG-RANGE POLITICAL AND SECURITY ASSESSMENTS. THIS HE FOUND TO BE DUPLICATIVE OF THE MANDATE OF THE APAG. MOREOVER, AT LEAST IN THE CASE OF ITALY THE KIND OF BROAD GAGUE EXPERTS ALLUDED TO CAN, IN ANY EVENT, ONLY BE FOUND IN THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, AND THEY ARE NOT NUMEROUS.
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4. SALLEO FURTHER REMARKED THAT THE MFA VIEW WOULD PROBABLY BE THAT THE LONDON MEETING OUGHT TO END AFTER THE FIRST "SUMMIT DAY" AND NOT GO ON A SECOND DAY, "SOLELY TO SATISFY NATO BUREAUCRATIC TRADITION" AND THEREBY "END ON A NOTE OF ANTI-CLIMAX". THERE OUGHT NOT TO BE AN AGENDA AS SUCH. RATHER PRESIDENT CARTER SHOULD ADDRESS THE SINGLE CENTRAL ISSUE THAT MOST CONCERNS THE ALLIANCE: HOW TO PURSUE DETENTE IN AN ENVIRONMENT OF UNDIMINISHED SECURITY, HOW TO MAINTAIN THE GLOBAL EAST-WEST BALANCE IN THE PRESENT POLITICO-ECONOMIC CONTEXT. THAT, HE OPINED, IS WHAT THE LEADERS OF THE ALLIANCE WOULD BE GOING TO LONDON TO HEAR.GARDNER

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